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Spring 2001

Spring 2001

Labor & Industry NEWS

Volume VI, Issue 1

TRA Program Specializes In New Beginnings

- **Nan Nail**

The Trade Readjustment Allowances Unit (TRA) provides financial assistance to Montanans who have become unemployed as a result of United States foreign trade policies (NAFTA). This unit provides benefits to claimants who are attending training approved through NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement). Training that will enable them to re-enter the job market.

Elaine Eidum, TRA Manager explains, "TRA is designed to assist people who have lost their jobs because their employer has been 'trade affected.' Trade affected refers to employers whose business has been affected by our foreign import policy or who have chosen to move their operation to another country because operating costs are lower. Since products can be manufactured for less in other countries, they can be imported and purchased for less by our U.S. employer's customers. When customers buy foreign products, the employer experiences a decrease in sales and production resulting in layoffs. It's those workers who can take advantage of the benefits provided." *(continued on page 3)*

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JMG Career Development Conference

- **Drea Brown**

Never throw up your hands and say you can't help today's teenagers. Never think you can't make a difference in our society and with our youth. Jobs for Montana's Graduates (JMG) is about making a difference with teenagers. **And you can help.**

Let me tell you a typical JMG story:

Cindy is now doing great! When Cindy entered JMG, she was involved in the criminal justice system and was drug dependent. She had poor attendance and was very quiet and reserved. During the year, she has become an officer in JMG, her poster took first place and she played a large part in the success of our fundraiser. She is feeling much better about herself now, and it shows in her appearance and attitude. She currently has perfect attendance and passed all her classes this semester. She is attending chemical dependency classes before school and she is working as a teacher's aide. JMG helps students to stay in school and provides career awareness so the student can transition successfully from school to work.

JMG will be holding the **Career Development Conference** in Butte at the Copper King on May 2, 2001. There will be approximately 250 students present for the conference. The students will be participating in workshops and competitive events. The competitive events relate to the career awareness curriculum they have been studying. Some of the competitive events are: employment preparation, decision-making, public speaking, life skills, math, poster/slogan and telephone skills. *(continued on page 6)*

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Commissioner's Corner

Mike Foster

Governor Martz has given me a unique opportunity to serve as the Commissioner of the Department of Labor and Industry. I am greatly honored and appreciate the confidence she has expressed in me.

So far, the experience has been great, and most of the credit goes to the people of this department. I have been very impressed with the dedication, loyalty, and professionalism of department personnel. The extra effort and teamwork that has been expended during the legislative session has been particularly impressive.

I look forward to meeting all of you and getting a chance to watch you in action

Acting as the Governor's legislative liaison during the session has complicated my duties as Commissioner, but the effectiveness and efficiency of department leaders has made the situation manageable. Although the session has put me behind the learning curve, it will soon be over and then I will be able to focus on my duties as the head of this department.

We are all anxiously awaiting the start-up of our new computer system MISTICS and are quite optimistic in anticipation of success. I'll report more on this topic next time.

I look forward to meeting all of you and getting a chance to watch you in action. Until next time, please take care.

Workers' Compensation Court

- **Mickey Lindgren**

In response to suggestions made by workers' compensation practitioners at last year's Governor's Conference, the Court is in the process of transforming the legal research capacities of its website into a system permitting one-stop research into Montana workers' compensation issues. An index covering workers' compensation topics has been developed and is already posted on the web. The text of new WCC decisions now includes keywords matching index topics, as well as a brief summary of the facts and decision, similar to the format used in publication of appellate decisions nationwide. As new decisions issue from the Workers' Compensation Court *and* from the Montana Supreme Court, the decision's topical summaries are posted into the index, with hyperlink to the full text of the case. Past decisions of the WCC and the Montana Supreme Court will be added to the research system in the next several months, with the goal of including all workers' compensation cases from 1993 to the present by the September Big Sky Governor's Conference.

Cash in your idea with the DLI Incentive Award!
Nominations due April 30
Contact Adeline Miller at 444-4737 for more Information.

High Fives

Congratulations to Joe Thares and Carol Vega for their reappointments to the Board of Labor Appeals.

"Mr. Andrew this information is wonderful! Thank you so much for being so thorough and detailed in your response – I can't begin to tell you how much I appreciate it. I wish more of the offices I worked with followed your example!"

- Laura Wendling

"This is a big help in trying to prepare RFP for adult funding – we just became aware of it (MtSaras – Software Casey Greenwood and company put together) and had we known it was available it would have saved hours of research, thought you might be interested in sending it to others that are struggling with demographic information for RFP. It has a great deal of useful information. Thanks!"

- Dan Randy and Paul
Dillon Workforce Center

Job Service and UI Division Form Joint Management Team

- **Raini Williams**

The Job Service and Unemployment Insurance Divisions have rejuvenated the JS/UI Management Team. As a subgroup of the team, Shirley Rush from the UI Helena Phone Claims Center, and Deb Buxbaum from the Job Service Division are the co-facilitators of a team of individuals who are working together to work on problem areas of joint concern to the divisions.

Other members of the team include: Linda Tope from the Great Falls Job Service Workforce Center; Bob Thornton from the Helena Job Service Workforce Center; Sandy Hays from the Miles City Job Service Workforce Center; Carol Lamey from the Havre Job Service Workforce Center; and Don Gilbert from the UI Division.

Some areas of concern the team are currently addressing are:

- UI claimant registration with Job Service
- Worker profiling
- Work test
- Winter workload
- Rapid Response activities
- MISTICS & POINTS

The team will forward any suggestions and recommendations for change to the JS/UI Management Team for their approval and implementation.

Gary Warren, New Fiscal Bureau Chief

- **Carol Larkin**

Gary Warren, recently came to the Department of Labor and Industry from the Teachers' Retirement System, where he was the Assistant Executive Director. He says he was looking for a change with new challenges and feels quite confident that he has found them in the Fiscal Support Bureau. His main goal is to improve communications, service and support to all of the Fiscal Support Bureau's Customers.

Gary's hobbies include primarily competitive Team Penning and motorcycle road trips as time permits. Team Penning is an equine event where three competitors attempt to pen three like numbered cattle from a group of 30 in under 90 seconds. Gary says that to win you need to consistently pen in under 40 seconds, stay on your horse, and work as a team. Winning times are typically 20-30 seconds. Gary's main riding partner is his wife, Bernie, of 26 years. This year they have a very busy schedule of weekend Penning competitions planned, with weekend events scheduled through June. He says his goal this year is to win at least 1/10 of the entry fees back in prize money, but he is probably over optimistic.

TRA New Beginnings *(continued from page 1)*

TRA provides benefits to assist with living expenses while a claimant attends training paid for by the TAA Program (Trade Adjustment Assistance). In other words, TAA pays for the training itself and TRA provides living assistance." There are many different kinds of training a person can pursue," states Eidum. "Computer training, truck driving school, business courses, and building maintenance are just some examples."

Eidum, who has been the Program Manager for approximately three years, is joined by Colleen Brockett who provides administrative support for the program. Brockett, who has only been with the unit a little over a month, states, "I find it challenging and I'm excited about it and about learning more about TRA." Brockett came to the unit from the Unemployment Benefits Bureau. "A lot of my background in unemployment is helping me. There are a lot of similarities and this is a very positive program. I'm looking forward to becoming more involved."

While TRA is a little good news and a little bad news, it is a very positive program for Montana. Bad news because of layoffs but good news because there are benefits available to help Montanans start over, often in completely new directions.

Information Technology Highlights

Kitten On The Keys

- Nan Nail

Any of you with a home computer and a cat know that the critter will recognize the sounds of the keyboard before you finish typing the first word. It's at that moment in time that you become the most attractive human on the planet. Before you know it, you have a lap full of furry helper more than willing to lend a hand...er...or paw, as the case may be. I firmly believe that left to their own devices, a cat can slap keys, walk on the keyboard and type in code that will slip past any known firewall and give you instant access to the main computer bank of the Star Wars National Air Defense System, the World Bank of Switzerland and Interpol Crime Information Center all at the same time. Once inside, you can scramble the Strategic Air Command, create your own Swiss bank account, credit yourself with a few gazillion dollars and erase all traces of the crime at the same time....all for the price of a catnip mouse and a couple of cans of Fancy Feast a day! (Nothing but the best for such a talented feline!)

I have a lawyer friend whose cat, appropriately named "Sherlock," dutifully follows every keystroke in every legal brief he writes. He also interjects tidbits of information from time to time that greatly enhance the document. One day, while citing a complicated precedent, Sherlock enhanced the text with his own contribution, unknown to my lawyer friend. While arguing the case in court, the judge called him to the bench and asked what the "grxzzzzwft" precedent was. He was in luck. The judge also possessed a precocious feline who dabbled in the literary arts from time to time. He won the case.

Aside from cat fur in the keyboard, we may be ignoring a valuable resource here. Anyone who knows cats will tell you there is an unsurpassed intelligence hidden behind that inscrutable gaze and those pointed ears. Perhaps I should take my cat down to the local convenience store and let HER select this week's lottery numbers. I'll let you know how it turns out.

Microsoft Word Tips

Time Saving Templates

- Nan Nail

Do you have a lot of documents that you have to produce over and over with only minor changes to each one? Do you get tired of having to format the same letter or form when you want to make variations of the same theme? Don't give up. There is hope! Microsoft Word allows you to create "templates" based on those documents and they can be adapted to any of your needs. Templates allow you build a document and include any "boilerplate" text, letterhead, logos, graphic images, addresses, etc. Also, templates are very easy to create. Templates also include macros, page layouts, margins, borders and other customized options. Once created, the template can be saved as a "Read Only" document and you can create as many new documents as you wish without changing the original template.

To create a template:

1. Open a new, blank document.
2. Type and format adding any special features you desire.
3. Click "File" in the toolbar.
4. Click "Save As" in the drop-down menu.
5. In the "Save As" menu box, locate the "Save As Type" box at the bottom.
6. Click the drop-down arrow and select "Document Template (*.dot)."
7. Select a location where the template is to be stored and name the template.
8. Click "Save."

In Depth Indexes

- Nan Nail

If you are like me, you rely heavily on indexes to find information in lengthy documents. When creating a document or report, you can add an index using Microsoft Word's Index and Tables function. As you create your report, mark the items you want included in the Index using the procedure listed.

Marking Index Items:

1. Highlight the text.
2. Press ALT+SHIFT+X
3. a. To create a main index entry, type or edit the text in the "Main Entry" box.
   b. To create a subentry, specify the main index en try, and then type the sub entry in the "Subentry" box. To include athird-level entry, type the suben try text followed by a colon (:) and the text of the third-level entry.
4. To mark the index entry, click "Mark." To mark all occurrences of this text in the document, click "Mark All."
5. To mark additional index entries, select the text, click in the "Mark Index Entry" dialog box, and then repeat steps 3 and 4.

Creating the Index:

Place the cursor where you want the index to go.

1. Choose "Insert" in the tool bar, "Index and Tables" in the drop-down menu.
2. Click the "Index" tab.
3. Choose "Options" in the Index tab of the Index and Tables dialog box. As you do so, watch the Print preview box to see what happens.
4. After you finish, click "OK".

Bite the Bullet

- Nan Nail

Bulleted lists are useful and offer many painless possibilities for the creative Microsoft Word user. With AutoFormat, creating these lists takes very little extra time or effort. Follow these steps to customize your bullets:

1. Open the document you created that contains the bulleted list.
2. Highlight the bulleted list.
3. Right-click the list and choose "Bullets and Numbering" from the shortcut menu.
4. Choose a bullet style or click "Customize".
5. Choose a custom bullet.
6. Click "Bullet" to select the bullet type you prefer.
7. Click "OK."
8. Note that the bulleted list has been reformatted with the new bullet style.

High Fives

"Hi! I am The Job Service Employer Committee Coordinator (JSEC Coordinator) for the Helena Job Service Workforce Center and an Employment Consultant. I frequently provide labor market and statistical information to Employers and Job Seekers. With MtSaras data it is a mouse click away instead of timely research. I can provide answers instantly instead of having to get back to them. This is better customer service."

- Robert Thornton

Congratulations to Anne O'Leary, an attorney with the Office of Legal Services, for winning the "Pro Bono Award" from the First Judicial Bar Association for her dedication and representation in providing legal assistance to needy individuals free of charge.

First Judicial Bar Association presents "Lifetime Achievement Award" to Bob Campbell for organizing the annual May 1st Law Day activities for students and for the time he has spent with students in Montana discussing the Montana Constitution and the importance of law in all our lives. Congratulations Bob!

ABC Clinics Ready To Go

- **Wade Wilkison**

The Employment Relations Division (ERD) helps coordinate the annual Assistance to Business Clinics (ABCs) program, and has just completed the schedule for clinics that will be held this year. ABCs are clinics held around Montana by agency representatives so that local businesses can learn about state and federal laws that impact the way they do business. The Montana Department of Revenue, Job Service, Unemployment Insurance, Workers' Compensation Regulation, and Wage & Hour programs provide written and PowerPoint slide presentations to help illustrate how businesses can comply with state regulations. Representatives from OSHA and the IRS help explain how businesses can comply with federal regulations. Clinics begin April 25th in Havre, and end October 17th in Polson.

Gary Holt, Data Management Supervisor of the Workers' Compensation Claims Assistance Bureau (CAB), chaired the ERD portion of the ABC Task Force this year, and provided oversight for the compilation of written materials distributed to each ABC participant. Marla Yager, also of CAB, integrated the materials into an almost one hundred page work manual for the clinics. Congratulations on another task done well!

Hearings Bureau Welcomes Trudy Phippen

- **Carol Larkin**

Please help the Hearings Bureau welcome our new Administrative Support Supervisor, Trudy Phippen. She's new to the Supervisor position, but not a completely new face, as she's been on the front desk for a month or so as a temp. We liked her so much we've convinced her to stay! Trudy is a native Montanan who grew up in Cut Bank and attended MSU (she's a big Bobcats fan, putting her at odds with some of the Bureau team).

Trudy has worked as an executive secretary, group home house parent for delinquent youth, Social Worker, Deputy Juvenile Probation Officer, Clerk of Court, and she spent over 4 years with the City of Bozeman Parking Division, so we think she can handle just about anything! She's relatively new to Helena, having moved here last September.

On the personal side, she has 2 sisters and 1 brother and stays busy keeping track of her 7 nieces and nephews, aged 3 through 12. She also enjoys shopping, watching team sports, and fishing, and loves to get away to spend time at her family's cabin in Glacier Park. We're sure she's going to be a great addition to the Bureau!

JMG Conference *(continued from page 1)*

Here is where you come in. Volunteers are needed on May 2, 2001 to help us make this conference a success. Individuals are needed to serve as competitive event judges, timekeepers, etc. To help make a difference, you can volunteer by sending an email to Drea Brown at dbrown@state.mt.us or calling her at 444-0978.

We would love to have you make a difference in a student's life. Come and join us on May 2, 2001.

High Fives

"Exiting news for Flathead area. Kalispell Chamber of Commerce awarded $25,000 grant from the US Chamber to conduct Workforce Learning Academies. They were one of 6 around the country to be selected. The Flathead Workforce Center will be partnering with Kalispell Chamber to put on the Academies around the area. Melody Down, and Virginia Sloan will play a big part in helping to organize this venture with the Chamber and Flathead Community College. Academies will be held in Kalispell, Polson and possibly Libby."

- Mike Shoquist

E R C

- Renee Wuertley

We were sorry to loose 2 valuable members this last quarter to other interests outside of the Department. Kim Warner of CSD and Laurel Vielle of JSD will be missed, we wish them luck in their new endeavors. On the bright side we would like to welcome **Carol Larkin** of CSD, **Lisa Vanderheiden** of JSD, and **Mike Bentley** of ERD as our newest members.

In February, a bake sale was held to raise money to replenish our depleting funds. As a result, ERC was able to help two department employees that were in financial need.

ERC also sponsored a very productive blood draw for the American Red Cross in February. Twenty-eight donors signed up, and twenty-one productive units were drawn. Red Cross will return in the fall!

Our thanks to everyone that donated food, hungry appetites and blood for these two projects. It is your participation that makes these projects successful.

This quarter the nominees for Employee of the Month included *Richard Semans at Human Rights, Ginger Sheperd at Billings Job Service, June Littlefield at Lake County Job Service, and Carolyn Gorshe at UI Quality Control.* The recipients of the EOM were **Richard Semans, Ginger Sheperd, and June Littlefield**.

Congratulations to all nominees and recipients!

Unique Fundraiser A Success

- Lanae Vetsch

You have heard of bake sales, silent auctions, get out of jail, and other fund raisers for various groups within the Department of Labor. However, the most recent one for the Helena I.A.P.E.S. local sub-chapter is a very unique way of making money. ***A 15 minute chair massage for your back, shoulders, neck and arms performed by Janice Miller and Carolyn Lewis, who are Helena local area Certified Massage Therapists.*** We have had an overwhelming response and it is a success!

Janice and Carolyn agreed to help I.A.P.E.S with this fund raiser and only charge $10.00 for the massage (which is a huge discount); $2.00 of each $10.00 received will go to the local chapter. Also, if you schedule a full body massage by the end of April, Janice and Carolyn will donate $10.00 of their $40.00 fee to I.A.P.E.S.

Massage is good for the mind, body and soul and it has been known to improve your outlook on life and will help make you more productive at work. Ask any of the your coworkers that have participated in this great fund raiser the rewards they have experienced. To date we have had 43 people participate.

There is still time to take advantage of this relaxing event! Make your appointment now! Contact Lanae Vetsch by email to reserve your spot for the chair massages scheduled for April 18th.

In Your Corner With Safety

How To Survive The Weekend

- Diane West

Many accidents that cause serious injuries and permanent disability occur away from work. We'd really like to see you back at work on Monday morning. So here are some reminders about off-the-job safety:

- Drive safely! Wear your seatbelt when you travel. Don't drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Observe the rules of the road, and adjust speed to suit road and visibility conditions.
- Wear the required Personal Protective Equipment for work and play. Wear an approved helmet for biking, hearing protectors for target shooting, eye protection for racquetball, safety footwear and protective eyewear when running power tools including lawn mowers.
- Fall-proof your home by eliminating slipping and tripping hazards. Remove clutter and obstacles such as extension cords, and loose carpets. Don't leave items on the stairs. Install a slip-proof surface in the bathtub or shower. Mop up spills promptly and remove ice and snow from outdoor walkways and steps.
- Install and maintain smoke detectors in your home. They should be located near sleeping areas on each floor of the house. Check and replace the batteries regularly.
- Have regular fire drills so all family members know how to escape and where to meet outside.
- Inspect your home regularly for fire hazards. Eliminate unnecessary accumulations of combustible materials such as paper, cardboard, plastic and fabric. Store any flammable liquids properly– in closed, approved containers well away from sources of ignition in a ventilated area. Also inspect for electrical hazards which can cause fires and shock. Check for damaged or worn cords, plugs, outlets and switches.

Remember to take your good safety habits with you when you leave work today. We'd like to see you back safe and sound tomorrow.

Budget Bureau Legislative Update

- Noelle Clark

CSD is working hard tracking bills introduced by the Department and also those bills that affect employees and the Department. The Department drafted five bills but only introduced four to the legislature. We have received favorable action on most of these. Senate Bill 32, the safety bill, has been through both the House of Representatives and the Senate, and is now waiting for the signature of the Governor, while House Bill 150, unemployment insurance bill, was recently "Tabled" in the Senate Committee. Senate Bill 164, the Workers' Compensation bill, has just been passed by the House committee and will now go to the House for consideration. And lastly, House Bill 87, the Workforce Investment Act bill, went to the Senate Business and Labor committee back at the end of January and has not yet been passed by that committee. We are currently in the second half of the 57th Legislature. At this time, things are moving rather quickly. The four bills made it past the transmittal period.

To explain, the transmittal is the half way mark during the legislative session. The Transmittal Break marks the deadline for the transmittal of general bills from the originating house to the other. Those bills that did not make transmittal are probably dead as it takes a 2/3 vote of the receiving house before it can be considered. Therefore, it is not very likely to be introduced again during this legislative session.

There are a total of 145 bills being tracked by the Department. The bills range from program specific items to budget, accounting, and personnel issues. A complete list of bills and the status of each of the bills is available for your review on the bookshelf at the west end of the first floor in the Walt Sullivan Building. If you would like a copy sent to you, please contact Noelle Clark at 444-0805.

The ***Montana Department of Labor and Industry's News*** is published quarterly for the department's employees.

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Nan Nail, Unemployment Insurance Division

Mickey Lindgren & Clara Wilson, Workers' Compensation Court

Carol Larkin , Centralized Services Division

Wade Wilkison & Marla Yager, Employment Relations Division

Contact Diane at 444-6845, if you have comments on this issue. We will accept your stories and photos at anytime.

Personnel Changes

December 00 - March 01

LEAVING DLI during this period were:
Tola Denny, Missoula Job Service
Donald Griffith, Missoula Job Service
Rose Villa, Missoula Job Service
Jean Branscum, Commissioner's Office
Pat Haffey, Commissioner's Office
Grant Ellison, Butte Job Service
Debra Freeberg, Libby Job Service
Teresa Spanogle, Missoula Job Service
Charlie Briggs, Community Services
Kimberly Warner, CSD Personnel & Training
Delores Warren, UI Benefits
Verna Boucher, Job Service Administration
Amy Sprouse, UI Phone Center
Robin Lindsay, Cut Bank Job Service
Beth Simonich, Safety Bureau
Bernadine Gantert
Eric Lund, Job Service Administration
Beverly Mills, Job Service Administration
Buffy Miller, ERD, WC Regulation

NEW EMPLOYEES in Permanent Positions:
Mike Foster, Commissioner's Office
Steven Cook, Research & Analysis, Job Service
Jayme Johnston, ERD, WC Claims Assistance
David Schneider, UI Program Management
Jamie Sowre, Missoula Job Service
Catherine Furness, Missoula Job Service
Susan Nott, Livingston Job Service
Farah Davidson, ERD, Human Rights
Leslie Duffy, CSD, Fiscal Support
Gary Warren, CSD, Fiscal Support
Linda Johnson, ERD, WC Regulation
Robert Klein, ERD Administration
Susan Hunt, Kalispell Job Service
Tracy Halubka, CSD, Fiscal Support
Paul Martin, Helena Job Service
Janis Pocius, ERD Administration
E. Kasey Reece, CSD, Fiscal Support
Michelle Stosich, Missoula Job Service
K.A. Yobst, Missoula Job Service
Corla McDonnell, UI Helena Phone Center
Elizabeth Olsen, UI Helena Phone Center
Jennifer Bredeson, Missoula Job Service
Trudy Phippen, CSD, Hearings Bureau

TRANSFERS
Marla Ducello fr UI Benefits to JS Administration
Roxanne Bullard fr Great Falls JS to Helena JS (Manager)
Mark Lanthorn fr UI Helena Phone Center to Human Rights

NAME CHANGES
Anne Merrifield to Anne Hersel
Dawn Davis to Dawn Shakespeare

675 copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of .32 per copy, for a total cost of $216.00, which includes $216.00 for printing and $.00 for distribution